

INSPECTION REPORT

DODDISCOMBSLEIGH COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Doddiscombsleigh, Exeter

LEA area: Devon

Unique reference number: 113198

Headteacher: Mrs Jackie Jackson

Lead inspector: Mrs Christine Huard

Dates of inspection: 13th – 15th September 2004

Inspection number: 266739

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	54
School address:	Doddiscombsleigh Exeter Devon
Postcode:	EX6 7PR
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Shira Rub
Date of previous inspection:	17 th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Doddiscombsleigh is a small village school just outside Exeter. It caters for pupils between the ages of four and eleven and, although most attend from the local area, some attend from nearby villages. Pupils are from a range of backgrounds and there is a broad social mix, although there is little deprivation. The area is above average in socio-economic terms. There are 54 pupils on roll and more boys than girls. Boys and girls are fairly evenly spread amongst classes, but Year 6 comprises of all boys. Entry into the reception class is staggered throughout the year. Many children have attended the pre-school held on the school site. The attainment of children currently in the reception class was above average on entry, but this varies from year to year between above and below average. The school has a very small percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups, and no pupils at an early stage of learning English. Few pupils are eligible for free school meals. About 13 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is also below average. One pupil has a statement of special educational needs. Extra support is provided for pupils who have difficulties with learning and hearing impairment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
27290	Mrs Christine Huard	Lead inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Religious education English as an additional language
9086	Mrs Rosalie Watkins	Lay inspector	
22856	Mrs Kath Campbell	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Music Physical education Personal, social and health education The Foundation Stage curriculum Special educational needs

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Doddiscombsleigh Community School provides a good education for its pupils and gives good value for money. Standards of attainment have been rising for the past two years and inspection evidence confirms that this trend is likely to continue. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this ensures that pupils achieve well. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and there is a strong emphasis on identifying areas for development and taking appropriate action to improve.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards in English and science are well above average, and are above average in mathematics and art and design by the end of Year 6.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good.
- Teaching is good across the school.
- Pupils are keen and eager to learn. They apply themselves well in lessons and produce a good quantity of high quality work.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided for very well.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum is not fully established for the children in the reception year.
- The school offers a broad and innovative curriculum which is enriched by a wide range of activities outside of school.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is not confident across all areas of the information and communication technology curriculum.
- Attendance is unsatisfactory.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 1999. The few issues identified as needing improvement have been fully addressed. The children under five now have good access to a variety of outside play equipment and the school has made very good provision for physical education not only for the younger pupils, but across the whole school. Although the school went through an unsettled period when standards fell, they are now rising again.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	E	D	E
Mathematics	A	E	C	C
Science	B	D	A*	A*

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

Achievement is good overall. In a school such as Doddiscombsleigh, where there are only a small number of pupils in each year group, standards in comparison with national statistics are useful only when considered in the light of knowledge of the individual pupils. The school has careful tracking systems which show that pupils of all abilities achieve well. For example, in 2003 results in science at the end of Year 6 were in the top five per cent nationally. Pupils' work over the last year reflects good progress overall, and some pupils in Year 6 made very good progress. Standards at the end of Year 6 are well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. These findings reflect the results of national tests in 2004, still to be validated, which showed that all pupils achieved the expected levels in English and science, with most achieving the higher level 5. Results were also much improved in mathematics. Overall, improvement over time has been broadly in line with that found nationally, although the last three years' improvement has clearly been in excess of that. The attainment of children, when they start the reception year, varies between

below and above average. They make sound progress and many will exceed the goals expected nationally¹ by the time they move into Year 1. In Years 1 and 2, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in art and design at the end of Year 6 are above those expected. Standards in geography, history, information and communication technology, and physical education are in line with those expected. Standards in religious education are in line with those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in design and technology and music. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well, and those who are gifted and talented achieve well because they are given work to match their capabilities.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are very good. Pupils' attitudes towards their work are very good. They are eager to learn and very attentive in class. Behaviour in and around the school is good. Pupils are very polite and have good relationships with each other and the adults with whom they come into contact. They are prepared well for life in an ethnically diverse society. Attendance is below average and mainly caused by parents taking pupils away on holiday during term time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides its pupils with a good quality of education. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teaching and learning in reception are always at least satisfactory, and sometimes good. This means that children make steady progress and achieve in line with their ability. However, the Foundation Stage curriculum is not yet firmly established. Consequently, some children do not always receive a broad enough range of activities to meet their individual needs. In Years 1 and 2, pupils learn and achieve well because they eagerly respond to the challenges with which they are presented. Pupils learn effectively in Years 3 to 6 because the work interests and inspires them. Assessment throughout the school is good and the information is used to set tasks which are matched well to pupils' capabilities. This is particularly beneficial to pupils with special educational needs, who achieve very well as a result, and to higher-attaining pupils, who are set appropriately challenging tasks.

The school provides a very good, broad curriculum. It is supported by a very wide range of activities which enrich pupils' learning further. The school takes very good care of its pupils. Relationships with other schools, parents and the local community are very good and benefit pupils' learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership. She has high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and a very good understanding of the areas where improvement is necessary. Governors challenge the school effectively and fulfil their statutory duties. They monitor finances well and ensure that spending is suitably focused on actions taken to raise standards. The staff work together very well as a team which means that all curriculum subjects are managed very well. Despite the fact that they all have multiple leadership roles, they ensure that there is adequate coverage of all subjects and pupils' progress is monitored and evaluated across all areas of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school. Despite the fact that some questionnaires showed negative views, there was no evidence to support these despite rigorous investigation. Indeed, parents went out of their way to tell inspectors of their support for the school. The pupils when spoken to, and when their questionnaires were analysed, showed clearly that they enjoy being at school. Their comments were largely positive and identified favourite activities such as 'story making', art and music, as well as the opportunities to play with friends.

¹ The Early Learning Goals refer to the six areas of learning covered in the Foundation Stage (reception year). These are: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things this good school should do to improve are:

- Ensure that children of reception age have access to the broad range of activities prescribed in the Foundation Stage curriculum.
- Ensure staff receive further training so that they are confident at teaching all areas of the information and communication technology curriculum.
- Implement the new attendance policy effectively, with particular attention to the criteria it introduces for authorisation of absence for family holidays.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Overall, achievement is good. Standards in all the core subjects are above average and are well above average in English and science by the end of Year 6.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good for all pupils in Years 1 to 6 because of the good teaching throughout the school.
- Standards in English and science are well above average by the end of Year 6, and are above average in mathematics, and pupils complete a good volume of high quality work.
- Standards in art and design are above average by the end of Year 6.
- Children in the reception class achieve satisfactorily overall, but do not always have access to a broad enough range of activities.

Commentary

1. The standards attained by pupils at Doddiscombsleigh are above those expected by the end of Years 2 and 6 and the pupils achieve well. Because there are very small numbers of pupils in each year group, any comparison of attainment between different groups should be treated with caution. Documentation shows that the trend in improvement is broadly in line with that seen nationally at the end of Year 6, but, over the last three years, it has been at a rate in excess of this. The school sets challenging targets for its own future development, based on a very good knowledge of the small numbers of pupils involved. The targets set for last summer were exceeded in both English and mathematics and the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 5 exceeded expectations in both subjects. Preliminary targets for results next summer have been raised in English and lowered slightly in mathematics and are very challenging, especially given the make up of the group who are all boys. However, with the consistently good teaching the pupils receive and the level of achievement identified, the targets should be attainable.
2. The school ensures that its pupils achieve well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science through good teaching. There is also consistent and regular assessment and tracking of pupils' achievement. There are good systems in place which enable staff to closely monitor the progress of the pupils, and compare performance and achievement because of the consistent way in which records are kept. This has a positive effect on standards because teachers ensure that pupils' needs are met. In the analysis undertaken after the 2003 tests, the school identified that results in writing were not as high as those in reading and made this a whole-school focus for improvement. As a result of action taken, pupils' writing improved considerably during the year, as was evidenced both in the national test results and in the quality of work examined during the inspection.
3. Children start school with a wide range of capabilities, although these are above average overall. Children achieve very well in the area of personal, social and emotional development, but only satisfactorily in literacy, language communication, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because the Foundation Stage curriculum is not yet firmly established. Consequently, children, particularly those who lack maturity, do not always receive a broad enough range, or rich enough variety of activities to meet their individual needs. All the children are likely to meet the expected goals for their age by the end of the year and some will exceed them.
4. Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in speaking, listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. The main reasons for the high standards are that lessons are well structured and pupils achieve well because each lesson builds

carefully on the one before, and on the learning by each pupil. Special focus weeks and collaborative projects with other schools help to develop pupils' learning and thinking skills. In mathematics, the curriculum is varied and covers all areas of the curriculum thoroughly. Pupils are encouraged to solve problems, and their independent learning skills are well developed through short sharp opportunities to confer with their classmates. Standards in science are above average. The curriculum is built around investigative work and, from an early stage, pupils learn to set up experiments and devise a fair test.

5. This good, broad learning continues into Years 3 to 6. At the end of Year 6 standards in English are well above average. Pupils' writing is of a good quality and the examination of pupils' work shows how it develops as they move through the school. They write for a wide variety of audiences, read a wide range of genres, and have ample opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills through classroom debate and informal reporting back of work carried out. In mathematics, standards at the end of Year 6 are above average. The curriculum is carefully structured, building on previous learning. Teachers carefully identify on a day-to-day basis what topics require further reinforcement or extension and appropriately adapt their planning. This means that most pupils are enabled to perform to their optimum potential. Standards in science at the end of Year 6 are well above average. Pupils are given ample opportunity to devise and carry out investigations and experiments and have a good knowledge of understanding of the subject. In all subjects pupils produce a high volume of good quality work.
6. Standards in the non-core subjects² inspected are all at least in line with those expected. Standards in art and design are above average. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for information and communication technology and pupils attain average standards by the end of Years 2 and 6.
7. The school has very few pupils from ethnic minorities and there are no pupils currently at an early stage of learning to use English. However, the school has appropriate procedures in place should such pupils join the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well overall because work is well matched to their needs. Pupils who have been identified by the school as being especially gifted and talented in particular areas of the curriculum are provided with tasks which appropriately challenge them enabling them to achieve well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' personal development is very good overall. Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and their behaviour is good. Their moral, social and spiritual development is very good, and their cultural development is good. Punctuality is satisfactory. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils like coming to school and their very good willingness to learn contributes to their achievements.
- Behaviour is managed very well so pupils understand how they should behave and are helped to live up to their teachers' expectations.
- The curriculum includes a very good breadth of opportunities for pupils' personal development and they benefit considerably.
- Attendance, although recently somewhat improved, is still not good enough. Family holidays taken in term time interrupt teaching and learning to a significant extent.

Commentary

8. Pupils of all ages come to school happily, because they like the welcoming family atmosphere and teachers help them to enjoy learning. Lessons are well judged to challenge and interest pupils, so they mostly concentrate very well and work very confidently. At times they are

² The non-core subjects are: art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music, physical education.

completely absorbed, as in a literacy lesson when Years 5 and 6 were captivated by their teacher's very expressive reading of a poem. Even the youngest children; those of reception age, join very happily in all activities, because they are supported by the caring staff and by the friendly help and example of older pupils. They are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals set for personal, social and emotional development by the time they join Year 1. Pupils' enthusiasm is obvious in physical education as well as in more academic lessons; the teaching motivates them to join energetically in team games and other activities and to do their best.

9. Behaviour is good and staff manage it very effectively. Parents and others who know the school well mention how behaviour slipped after the previous inspection, when changes of headteacher had an unsettling effect. A few parents are still anxious about behaviour. However any problems are now in the past. The rules which pupils themselves help to decide show that they understand very well how they should behave. Occasional small lapses arise when individuals forget themselves, but staff cope skilfully with such slips so they are short lived. The school gives very good support to any pupil with recognised behavioural difficulties. Exclusion is viewed as a last resort. There was one fixed-term exclusion in the previous year, with the same pupil excluded permanently afterwards.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	63	1	
White – Irish	1		
Mixed – White and Asian	1		

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

10. Helped by the example of adults in their school community, pupils readily show care and help for each other. Staff find ways to promote this further. In an assembly, for instance, older pupils were able to tell younger ones how to recognise bullying and what to do about it. Such unkindness is rare and no evidence of bullying or harassment was seen during the inspection. However, pupils know they can ask for help over any concerns and the school has appropriate strategies to deal with any incidents should they occur.
11. Opportunities for pupils' spiritual and moral development are integrated into lessons, as well as into assemblies, very well. Feelings of appreciation and respect for the environment are reflected very expressively in the poems and artwork developed recently during a project on local rivers. At the previous inspection rather little was done to introduce pupils to other cultures but good opportunities are now offered. For instance, pupils speak eagerly of their links with a Ghanaian school. They mention how the lives of its pupils differ from their own and they proudly explain the resources they sent for them to use. In addition, further links are being developed locally, so that pupils can find more about peoples of different ethnicity who live in areas close to their own.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	8.0	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

12. Attendance varies greatly from year to year but, on balance, is unacceptably low. During 2003-2004 it increased to a little over 93 per cent, but this still lower than usually seen in other schools. There is no unauthorised absence but absences for family holidays are a significant

proportion of the days missed. Such holidays cause concern because they cause gaps in pupils' learning. The gaps are only filled because, when pupils return to school, teachers are alert to spend time helping them catch up. A good clear policy has recently been carefully developed to explain attendance issues to parents. It lays down a strict, but fair, response to future requests for holiday absence. Good liaison is in place with the education social worker to help reinforce this new policy. Recording of attendance is in good order; irregularities found at the previous inspection have been addressed.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching, learning and assessment are good overall and enable pupils to achieve well. The curriculum is innovative and very good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and monitoring their progress are good. Pupils are cared for very well and the school has a very good partnership with parents, other schools and the community.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- Assessment information is used well to track pupils' progress and plan appropriate tasks.
- Pupils work well together. They apply themselves very well to tasks and produce a good quality of work because teachers have high expectations of what can be achieved.
- Teachers are not confident teaching all areas of information and communication technology.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 18 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1	4	11	2	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

13. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Teachers know the pupils very well and this enables them to plan carefully and provide suitable challenging work for the pupils. The school has maintained the good quality of teaching found at the last inspection. Teaching for children in the reception year is satisfactory because sometimes there is too little variety in the activities provided for them and they have to sit still for too long a period of time during the introduction to some lessons. Teachers have a good command of most of the subject areas except for information and communication technology where, although confident with most aspects, they have limited knowledge and understanding of the modelling component of the curriculum. The school has identified this weakness and training has been arranged to address the issue.
14. Teachers ensure that pupils develop good levels of knowledge, improve their skills and deepen their levels of understanding. Planning is thorough, with clear objectives to indicate what is to be learnt by pupils. Teachers form good relationships with pupils, show a high level of interest in their welfare and give praise and encouragement to spur pupils to higher levels of achievement. Effective teaching methods are used, and pupils respond very well to imaginative teaching. In the excellent lesson observed, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were constructing a class poem about a bear and were encouraged to sit with their eyes closed and imagine themselves as the creature before being invited to contribute ideas. Good question and answer sessions

during the introduction of lessons, encourage pupils to use their reasoning skills, and allows them to express their views clearly, as well as enabling the teacher to assess their level of understanding. In the best lessons, the plenary session³ not only consolidated pupils' learning, but also showed them what they should do next, in preparation for the following lesson. Learning resources are used well, particularly individual whiteboards to make jottings and to draft answers. Classes are very well managed and teachers insist on high standards of behaviour.

15. The support staff are committed and know the pupils very well. These staff are used well in lessons to address the particular learning needs of individual pupils or groups of pupils.
16. The introduction of a comprehensive monitoring system of teaching and learning by the headteacher has had a significant impact on the quality of teachers' work. There is a regular programme of observations, undertaken by staff and the headteacher, using an approved system covering set criteria. Staff are given details of the successful elements of their practice and clear guidance on areas for further development. Pupils' work is also reviewed regularly with a specific focus on agreed areas, such as the quality of presentation, the progress being made over time by pupils, and the suitability of the match of work.
17. Pupils are enthusiastic about their learning and have very positive attitudes to school. They work well together, and relationships between pupils of all ages in a class are very good. This aspect was illustrated very well in a history lesson for Years 3 to 6. The pupils were carrying out an investigation into Henry the Eighth and his wives, using a range of sources. Pupils were working in mixed age groups and the work was matched carefully to the capabilities of pupils within the groups. Pupils worked enthusiastically and systematically in groups making suggestions as to how the work should be presented until they were satisfied with the outcome. When questioned by the teacher, the pupils gave good reasons for their particular arrangements. Pupils apply themselves well, present their work neatly and produce a good volume of work in the time available. This is because teachers have high expectations of what pupils are capable of achieving and ensure that everyone is included and does their best. An appropriate amount of homework is also completed by pupils on a weekly basis.
18. Assessment procedures are good. There are examples of good assessment practices throughout the school. The tracking of pupils' progress is undertaken, and information is used well when planning improvements. Marking is thorough and the teachers make valuable comments which help pupils to understand what they have to do to improve. Pupils have specific targets for improvement and many older pupils know exactly how their performance in English and mathematics can be improved. Assessment is used well to identify those pupils who will benefit from intervention strategies. These are comprehensive and regular and result in pupils making good progress.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is very good. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good.
- Equality of opportunity is very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The headteacher and staff monitor the complexities of a mixed-age, mixed-key-stage curriculum very well.
- The school has taken innovative steps to provide pupils with an interesting range of worthwhile experiences in all subjects.

³ Plenary session is the final part of the lesson which is used to consolidate pupils' learning.

- Extra-curricular opportunities, particularly for participation in the arts, are very good for a school of this size.
- The Foundation Stage curriculum, though developing well, is not yet securely established.
- The learning environment and resources have improved significantly.

Commentary

19. The school provides very well for the academic and personal development of all pupils. The curriculum is very well organised and planning is of high quality. Provision is enhanced by very good extra-curricular opportunities, ranging from nature club to tag rugby. Many of the positive features found during the previous inspection have been retained and there has been a good level of improvement. Governors are very involved and well informed about curriculum issues. Weaknesses found previously in some aspects of music and physical education provision have been fully addressed, and both subjects now make a significant contribution to pupils' very good personal development. The school has received 'Activemark' and 'Healthy Schools' awards for its work, and has purposeful curriculum links with schools across the country. Every step has been taken to provide the best for pupils. Recent initiatives, such as science weeks and the 'rivers' project, combined with a strong creative curriculum focus, provide pupils with an exciting range of learning activities that promote good learning. The school's approach towards the literacy and numeracy strategies is very effective. It develops skills well through other subjects and provides a good range of information and communication technology opportunities that enhance pupils' learning.
20. The very good programme for pupils' personal development permeates much of the school's work and enhances provision considerably. Sex and relationships education, and drugs awareness, form part of the school's involvement in the 'Healthy Schools' initiative. Pupils have numerous opportunities to participate in extra-curricular visits to places, such as Cannonteign Falls, and visitors are invited into school on a regular basis. Equality of opportunity is very strong and at the forefront of decision making. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds succeed because they are encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of school life. By the time pupils leave, the vast majority are mature individuals who are well prepared for the next stage of education.
21. Children in the Foundation Stage receive an interesting range of carefully planned activities that ensure they are well prepared for Key Stage 1. However, some activities adhere too closely to the National Curriculum, rather than the Foundation Stage curriculum guidelines. Activities sometimes lack the richness and variety that children need at this stage of the school year. Consequently, these do not always meet the needs of individual children.
22. The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs. It successfully ensures these pupils achieve their full potential. Support staff make a strong contribution to pupils' very good learning, particularly during literacy and numeracy lessons. Individual education plans are detailed; they match class work well and reflect the targets set. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and those with special educational needs are totally integrated into all aspects of school life.
23. Despite its relative isolation, the school has very good links with other local primary and secondary schools and very good community involvement. All links are purposeful and provide opportunities otherwise unavailable to the school.
24. There have been several changes of leadership since the previous inspection. The school has sufficient well qualified and experienced staff and each subject has a highly effective co-ordinator. Teaching assistants are a valuable asset.
25. Recent improvements to the building, with better facilities for both staff and pupils, have a positive impact. The school copes well with its cramped hall conditions and successfully provides pupils with a balanced physical education curriculum, despite the difficulties. The playground is also cramped, but the large field area goes some way towards compensating for the lack of play space. Within a tight budget, all subjects are at least adequately resourced.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision overall for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. It provides very good support, advice and guidance for pupils, based on the monitoring of achievements and personal development. Very good consideration is given to pupils' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is a very welcoming and caring community so pupils are secure, happy and confident.
- Teachers understand the personal and learning needs of individual pupils very well and take very good account of them.
- Very good steps are taken to promote pupils' health and well being.
- Teachers listen carefully to pupils' views so they can make an effective contribution to the functioning of the school community.

Commentary

26. Parents are very happy with the way the school cares for their children. Staff give careful attention to induction procedures; they make a pre-joining home visit and children can attend part-time when they first join. In addition parents like the way children can attend pre-school provision on the site. They know continuity is assured, because one of the school's part time assistants also leads the pre-school group. Older pupils who join from other schools soon feel at home because of the friendliness of both staff and pupils.
27. The headteacher and other staff have an impressive understanding of the personalities, achievements and needs of individual pupils. Well-focused support is provided for each one, with careful account taken of any special educational needs. Pupils are guided to select literacy and numeracy targets for themselves. They are involved in self-assessment and gain a sense of responsibility for their own learning. Older pupils are asked to consider which styles of learning suit them best, and staff take account of their views.
28. Guidance for personal development is very successful. A formal audit provides a very good cross-check for teachers' perceptive informal monitoring. Teachers use the understanding they gain, for instance they find ways to build self-confidence if it is lacking. Awards are used to good effect. Staff make a point of 'catching' individuals being good; this is recorded in the 'Caught being good at Doddi' book. They then celebrate their good actions in assemblies and in newsletters.
29. Pupils' well-being is promoted very effectively by the 'awake and shake' sessions now introduced to get the day off to a good start. Pupils follow a range of energetic activities that challenge their minds as well as their bodies, for instance as they work with a partner, co-ordinating their star jumps. Careful attention is given to health and safety routines, to underpin pupils' wellbeing across the range of school activities. Improvements have been made, following issues raised at the previous inspection. The headteacher gives thorough attention to child protection procedures if the need arises, and is shortly to attend training to further enhance her grasp of such matters.
30. Staff give very good attention to pupils' views. The open, friendly atmosphere, together with opportunities created in 'circle time'⁴ and through the school council, enable all to feel secure to put forward their views on any topic. The school takes suggestions seriously and where possible acts on them, so that pupils make a positive difference to the organisation of their community.

⁴ 'Circle time' is a session provided for pupils to discuss a wide range of personal issues as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's partnership with parents is very good. Its links with other schools and with the community are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents give much willing support to the work of the school and staff welcome and encourage their involvement.
- Links with the community are exploited very successfully so that they make an important contribution to pupils' experience.
- The school's partnership with other primary schools is extensively developed to help provide for pupils' needs.

Commentary

31. Parents value the strong sense of friendly community generated among all who are involved with the school. They are keen to support their children and contribute in all sorts of ways. As well as helping in lessons, with clubs and on trips they are skilled at fundraising. They organise very successful art exhibitions that raise several thousand pounds for the school. In addition parents are involved with governors, staff and pupils in the project group for an innovative environmentally friendly classroom. This is planned with a sustainable design that has already won the school a national award with £6000 funding attached.
32. Parents feel happy to ask staff about any problem, and they have a good level of confidence that any difficulties will be resolved. Staff welcome informal contacts at the start and end of the school day. There are also good, formal systems for sharing information, including regular informative newsletters, detailed annual reports, and discussions about target setting with the teacher and their child. Additional meetings give parents a chance to learn more about the curriculum. The school regularly seeks parents' views on issues such as the accommodation and takes these into account in its planning.
33. A few parents are less happy. One suggests that the flow of information, such as advance written notice of events, could sometimes be better. The headteacher is very willing to further reinforce links with parents and recognises room for an extra effort here. Other points parents raise are found to be unjustified or to relate to matters already resolved before the inspection.
34. Visits and visitors are used to very good effect to add to the breadth of pupils' learning. The Dartmoor education officer guides explorations of the moor and of local rivers. Other visitors, such as artists, and specialists in African dance, make a valuable contribution.
35. Links with other schools also have a big impact. For instance, a study of rivers was a joint project, culminating in a shared celebration of the displays and dances evolved by four local schools. Pupils in Year 6 meet with other of their age, from other schools, at various, shared events and this eases their move to the local secondary school. The headteacher makes very good use of initiatives for linking at management level with other schools, both nearby and in other parts of England. By two-way sharing of ideas, concerns and successes, she develops new approaches to benefit the achievements of her own pupils and she also helps developments in other schools.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good overall. There are significant strengths in the leadership of the headteacher. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good leadership of the headteacher, and her very good insight into what needs to be improved, provide clear direction for the school.
- The governors monitor the performance of the school effectively.
- There is a very good team spirit and staff work very well together to raise achievement.
- The finances of the school are managed well.

Commentary

36. The headteacher provides very good leadership. The aims and values of the school place a high priority on the provision of a stimulating and inspiring education for all pupils. The aims and ethos of this school have a strong emphasis on valuing all pupils, whatever their capabilities. All that the school does closely reflects these ideals. Since her appointment three years ago, the headteacher has proved herself to be a highly competent and committed leader. Standards in national tests have improved and expectations of what the school, as a whole, is capable of have risen considerably. In order to bring about changes, the headteacher successfully identified the problems with the quality of teaching and learning and took swift and appropriate action to address this. She has a clear vision for empowering both staff and pupils to give of their best and is focused upon improving teaching and learning in order to raise standards of achievement. She aims to improve the school further through the continued development of the non-core subjects. Staff, pupils, governors and parents respect these expectations. The whole staff team has equally high expectations of what the school can achieve. They work closely with the headteacher and give much useful feedback, advice and support.
37. The governing body provides clear direction and good support under the very good direction of the Chair. It fulfils all its statutory duties. There have been several changes in the governors in the last three years, but they are generally confident and understand their roles and responsibilities well. Many governors visit the school regularly. This leads to them developing an awareness of standards and achievement and enables them to monitor various aspects of the curriculum. This builds good relationships between staff and governors and gives governors a greater insight into how the school is organised. They are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and meet with staff to discuss action plans to improve different aspects of the curriculum. This is a useful means of evaluating how well the school is tackling weaker areas. The governors play a crucial role in the development planning of the school. They receive very good information on the curriculum and other aspects of the school's organisation through reports from the headteacher. For example, the headteacher recently compiled a detailed report on how the school's tracking system works, in order for governors to understand how the staff make judgements about pupils' progress and achievement. Governors have a good understanding of their monitoring role and carefully review progress made towards targets.
38. This is a small school and the headteacher and teaching staff have a very clear picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and use monitoring effectively to target action plans for development. There is a shared desire for pupils to achieve high standards, but this does not compromise the broad curriculum and wide range of learning opportunities provided by the school, and the development of all pupils as individuals. A highly positive environment has been developed and maintained. This, combined with pupils' very good attitudes and good behaviour, makes a significant contribution to their learning. The headteacher receives very good support from all the staff and they work very closely together in deciding whole-school priorities for development. The school, quite rightly, has concentrated its initial efforts on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. These areas have been monitored particularly well by the

school. This monitoring includes examining teachers' planning, regular lesson observations by the headteacher, and the systematic examination of pupils' written work. These activities have contributed to the on-going improvements in the curriculum and quality of teaching and learning, as well as enabling the school to identify priorities for future development. Through a well developed performance management process, teachers receive high quality feedback on their work and as a result teachers are able to develop their practice through a well-structured programme of staff development.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	206,260	Balance from previous year	7,400
Total expenditure	191,218	Balance carried forward to the next	22,442
Expenditure per pupil	3,541		

39. The school improvement plan is linked closely to the school's finances. This ensures that evaluations are made on the extent to which all pupils benefit from targeted spending in the curriculum. Finances are managed well by the school's administrative officer. The headteacher applies the principles of best value well and the governing body is gaining a greater understanding of what this implies. All elements of the school's spending are evaluated to ensure that the most economic, effective and efficient quality of education and support is provided for the pupils in its charge. The school administrator plays a key role in this process, ensuring materials are bought at the best price, and keeping everyone informed about the state of the school's finances. Governors are aware of the need to ensure that the school remains financially secure, and they are well involved in forward planning and carefully consider all options to so that the educational provision made for the pupils remains as good as possible. To this end, a larger than usual carry-over figure was allowed in order to be able to off-set staffing costs. This will enable the pupils in Years 3 to 6 to be taught in two groups every morning for the coming year, which is intended to enhance teaching and learning for them.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **satisfactory** overall, with some good and very good features. Personal, social and emotional development is a particular strength. Very good induction procedures and links with parents, praised during the previous inspection, remain strong. The school has made steady improvement by, for example, addressing the issue of outdoor play provision effectively.

40. At the time of the inspection there were five children in the Foundation Stage, four full-time and one part-time, none of whom had special educational needs. All had received pre-school experience.
41. Levels of development of the current intake are slightly above those of other children this age. Most have secure early language, literacy and numeracy skills and a good knowledge of the world in which they live. Personal and social skills are well-developed and despite only being in school a short period of time, children are settled, confident and secure.
42. The quality of teaching and learning is always at least satisfactory and sometimes good. Children make steady progress and achieve in line with their ability. Difficulties associated with teaching a class with three age groups are managed well, because planning is of very high quality. Activities are well organised and strong teamwork between teaching and support staff makes a positive contribution to children's learning. However, the Foundation Stage curriculum is not yet firmly established. Consequently, children, particularly those who lack maturity, do not always receive a broad enough range, or rich enough variety of activities, to meet their individual needs. Assessment procedures are good, but sometimes do not pay sufficient attention to measuring children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
43. The co-ordinator has a sound view of strengths and weaknesses. All decisions are reached with the best interests of the children in mind. The Foundation Stage accommodation has improved considerably in recent years and now provides spacious classrooms and good quality resources for both pre-school and reception children. The school makes best use of a small separate outdoor play area and children have benefited from the introduction of new equipment to extend learning opportunities. Plans for further development are well advanced.
44. Two areas of learning: **physical and creative development**, were not observed in detail during this inspection and it is not possible to make a judgement on either overall provision or standards. However, there is evidence that both activities are planned for appropriately. The school has significantly improved the resources for outdoor play for the younger children and they have a good range of apparatus and toys all of which should help promote their physical development.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Personal, social and emotional development is a very important part of school life. It underpins all the work of the school.
- All children are valued and know they are part of a very caring community.
- Staff provide very good role models.

Commentary

45. The introduction of pre-school experience has had a very positive impact on provision. When children enter the reception class, they already know staff and older classmates. Teaching is good and the school builds successfully on strong links with home and pre-school. Consequently, most children are very confident and secure. They make rapid progress, achieve very well and reach above average standards. Routines are firmly established and learning is fun. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is a very important feature of provision throughout the school. All staff have clear expectations of behaviour, courtesy and collaboration. Children quickly learn to treat each other with respect and kindness and enjoy being part of the wider school community. By the time they reach Year 1, most children exceed the Early Learning Goals.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan and organise activities well so that the children can practice and develop a full range of skills.
- Adults' skilled interaction with the children ensures that they learn to reason and use language with increasing expertise to tell, explain and describe.

Commentary

46. Children are confident speakers and listeners. All can recognise most letters and know letter sounds. Some can already read and sound out simple words confidently. They are learning correct letter formation and beginning to write neatly. Most children are on the way to meeting the learning goals required for this area and will certainly achieve them by the time they move into Year 1. However, others are not so confident, and there is not a sufficiently broad range of activities for these children to enable them to practise their developing skills. Teaching is sound and children achieve satisfactorily because they are given an appropriate range of activities to develop their speaking, listening and early reading and writing skills. Whole-group sessions ensure that pupils learn to listen carefully. They answer questions, and are encouraged to do so in full sentences. When they work as a group, adults take every opportunity to encourage the children to talk, ask questions for themselves and generally increase their vocabulary. Children listen eagerly to stories, and books are always put out for them to look at. They respond pleasurably to tales such as '*Nine Ducks Nine*', and eagerly predict what they think will happen next in the story. Routines for reading with adults at home and at school are firmly established and parents make a good positive contribution towards children's enjoyment of reading.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children receive a good balance of interesting practical activities that develop understanding effectively.
- There is not always a wide enough variety of activities to meet the needs of children.

Commentary

47. The children currently in the reception class entered the school with above average mathematical understanding. Their achievement is satisfactory and they are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals, by the end of the reception year. The quality of teaching and

learning is always satisfactory. The children of reception age respond well to the challenge of counting quickly when working alongside their older classmates. They also benefit from working in a small group on purposeful activities, such as sorting and matching. However, children of all abilities sometimes complete the same tasks. Some find the work too easy and they do not always make as much progress as they could. In addition, the teaching of numeracy for long periods at this stage of the term is inappropriate for some, because they lack the maturity to concentrate. Although the reception-age children have opportunities to learn in a less formal way, there is not always a rich enough variety of activities to meet their individual needs.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The local environment is used very effectively to enhance learning.
- Children develop sound computer skills.
- Children do not always have enough opportunities to explore and experiment with tools and materials of their choice.

Commentary

48. Children enter the school with a very secure knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Many have good first-hand knowledge of the development of animals through rural life. Children make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily. The reception-age children are fully involved in the school's many curriculum initiatives, such as the 'rivers' project, and these develop their understanding well. They value the beauty of the school's unique location and are well informed about the roles of people in the community, such as fire fighters. However, although activities are presented in a way that sustains their interest and concentration, they do not have regular enough access to a range of tools and equipment that develop independent investigation and enquiry skills.
49. The quality of teaching and learning is always at least satisfactory and often good. Children have ample opportunities to develop information and communication technology skills through a good range of programs well matched to their needs. They demonstrate great confidence and independence in their computer work. The school makes appropriate provision for the teaching of religious education in the Foundation Stage. The vast majority of children currently in the reception year will start Year 1 with above average knowledge of the world in which they live.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' attainment is above average by Year 2.
- Pupils' attainment is well above average in Year 6.
- The quality of teaching in English is good.

Commentary

50. Pupils enter the school with above average language and literacy skills. Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 builds on these so that pupils achieve well. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are all above average by the end of Year 2 and reflect the results of national tests.
51. Almost all pupils by Year 2 are confident speakers with a wide vocabulary and general knowledge. They not only read fluently, with good understanding, but also discuss what they have read with mature reflection. They already have a wide knowledge of a range of children's literature and they express firm preferences for particular writers. Pupils of all abilities read expressively and with enthusiasm. An examination of pupils' work from last year showed that nearly all pupils had a firm mastery of the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and joined handwriting by the end of the year. They wrote confidently and enthusiastically for a wide range of different purposes, using sophisticated vocabulary and complex sentence structures. It is clear that lessons are very productive as almost all pupils completed a considerable amount of good quality work during last year.
52. Learning is underpinned by the very good attitudes of the pupils. They are responsive, eager to answer questions and join in discussions intelligently. They listen well to the teacher and to each other and maintain their concentration.
53. An examination of pupils' work showed that standards in Year 6 were well above average by the end of last year and reflects the results of national tests. The school was creative in its approach towards writing, which was identified as a focus for whole-school improvement. Topics were selected which appealed to and inspired the pupils and poetry was used to very good effect to promote their developing skills. Pupils currently in Year 6 achieve very well and are also producing work of an above average standard. They are articulate and engage in informed discussion of a wide range of topics. Their wide vocabulary enlivens their writing. Pupils have well developed reading skills. For example, they can analyse why characters behave as they do and make informed predictions of how a plot might develop. They understand the term 'genre' and can give examples of different types of book they enjoy. They can compare the styles of different writers, using evidence from their wide reading to justify their views. Higher attaining pupils are already developing distinctive writing styles and an individual 'voice'. When constructing a class poem about a hungry bear, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used imagery, especially simile and metaphor, as well as exciting vocabulary. A lower-attaining pupils produced the line '*I am panting, I am drooling, I am stumbling towards my prey*', whilst, from a higher attainer, '*I am the kingfisherman*', was an interesting play on words. Both the quality and quantity of work achieved is impressive and well above average.
54. The quality of teaching of English is good throughout the school and one excellent lesson was observed. The pace of lessons is brisk and pupils are given adequate time to consolidate their learning. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils studying '*The Wind in the Willows*' are asked to reflect on the river from Rat's point of view. One pupil wrote 'It shimmers and twinkles like a lantern in the light'. Teachers' introductions are informative, but provide good opportunities for pupils to present their own views and experiences. Lessons are conducted in a calm and purposeful atmosphere, based on good relationships both between pupils and teachers and between pupils.
55. Teachers use information from assessment to plan well for the needs of both higher- and lower-attaining pupils. Support staff are used well to help pupils tackle work which meets their needs. The analysis of pupils' work shows that lower attaining pupils are consistently provided with tasks that meet their needs and enable them to work towards targets on their individual education plans.
56. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The school appropriately continues to focus upon writing in order to consolidate the improvements already made. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop aspects of the English provision without losing essential aspects of the current successful teaching strategies. Guided reading is currently well established and successful, both in developing pupils' knowledge of a wide range of literature and in developing their literary

criticism skills. Key links are made between pupils' reading and writing development. Pupils respond well to a range of teaching methods and thrive under the expectation that they will consistently produce a significant amount of high quality writing. Regular evaluative monitoring by the whole staff, both of lessons and pupils' books, ensures that already good practice is constantly being refined. Information from assessment is used to plan effectively for the needs of all pupils.

57. At present there is sound use of information and communication technology in English. Pupils have developed good word-processing skills, and have learned how to use a publishing programme. There is good quality new equipment in all classrooms, which means that pupils are now timetabled to use information and communication technology on a daily basis.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

58. There is good evidence of history and geography being used as a focus for work within the literacy hour. Pupils are encouraged to write extensively in other areas of the curriculum. Their wide general knowledge and vocabulary allow them to make informed contributions to work across all other subject areas.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of mathematics are very good.
- The school has used tracking procedures very effectively to raise standards.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Commentary

59. Results of the 2003 national tests indicated that standards in Key Stage 1 were well above average when compared to schools nationally and very high when compared to similar schools. Early indications are that the same high standards have been maintained in the 2004 tests, with a small increase in the percentage of pupils achieving higher levels. Standards in Key Stage 2, which were close to the national average in 2003, improved in 2004. However, these results form only part of the story and must be treated with caution, as attainment on entry varies from year to year, and standards fluctuate considerably because of the small numbers of pupils involved. For example, despite the school's best efforts, standards are not expected to be as high at the end of Key Stage 2 over the next two years because of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in these year groups.
60. Inspection findings reveal why standards are, overall, on an upward trend, and why there has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The focus on tracking the progress of individual pupils has pinpointed those in most need very effectively. The school regards the success of each pupil as paramount. Despite the constraints of a tight budget, it has provided additional support so that pupils from two classes are taught in three groups each morning. The success is clear to see. Pupils of all abilities throughout the school enjoy greater individual attention and, consequently, achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs, who receive targeted support, achieve very well. Focused monitoring has also resulted in improved quality of teaching. Evidence taken from examples of previous work reveals that the emphasis on providing interesting and challenging activities, particularly in the using and applying aspect of mathematics, is promoting deeper understanding of mathematical concepts very effectively.
61. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are above average. By Year 2, most pupils have a very secure understanding across all aspects of the mathematics' curriculum. They are well equipped for work in Key Stage 2. By Year 6, many develop mature mathematical thinking and devise a good range of strategies for solving problems. All year groups make effective use of

computers to increase their numeracy skills. There are many examples of information and communication technology being used well to support mathematical understanding.

62. The overall quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good. In all lessons, teachers plan very well for the different age groups. Occasionally, they spend too long giving instructions and miss valuable opportunities to give pupils who have not understood further practice. Generally, however, work is matched well to the needs of individuals. Teaching assistants make a strong positive contribution to pupils' learning. All teachers use warm-up sessions well to engage pupils' interest and develop speaking and listening skills, through good quality discussion. Pupils want to learn because work is interesting and often challenging. Homework is purposeful and is used effectively to support work done in class. The school recognises the importance of assessment in its quest for even higher standards. Good quality 'Record of Achievement' books, combined with a thorough approach towards checking the progress of individual pupils, give a clear indication why standards are rising and why teachers know the capabilities of each pupil so well.
63. Very strong subject co-ordination has successfully moved the subject forward and there is good capacity for further improvement. Every member of staff has an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses and a very clear direction for the pupils in their care.

Mathematics across the curriculum

64. Pupils use mathematical skills very effectively as part of their work in other subjects. There are numerous examples of well-planned opportunities in subjects such as science, geography and design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Innovative curriculum initiatives have raised the profile of science and made a strong contribution towards the marked improvement in standards.
- Procedures for tracking pupils' progress are very good.
- Teachers throughout the school develop pupils' scientific language well.
- Pupils enjoy science and want to succeed because learning is fun.

Commentary

65. During the inspection, it was not possible to observe science lessons in some year groups. Additional evidence, taken from a full year's written work, indicates that standards are above average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well above average at the end of Key Stage 2. This is a much improved picture since the previous inspection. Children start the reception year with a good knowledge of the world about them. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, they have made good progress and achieve well. Teachers in Key Stage 2 build very successfully on firm foundations. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, because activities are exciting and learning is fun. The introduction of collaborative projects with other schools, half-termly 'Focus Weeks', cross-curricular topics and science days have made a significant contribution to the subject's success. Science is a very high profile subject. Consequently, by the time pupils leave the school, most have a very secure grasp of the subject. Some older pupils demonstrate very mature scientific thinking, boys and girls achieve equally well, and pupils with special educational needs achieve particularly well when they receive additional support.
66. The overall quality of teaching and learning in both key stages is good, with some very good teaching observed in Key Stage 2. Planning is very detailed and tasks are very appropriate to the needs of all pupils. In a good Key Stage 1 lesson, the teacher promoted scientific language very well and, in all lessons, teachers develop pupils' speaking and listening skills at every

opportunity through good quality group discussion. Most pupils collaborate well in their work. In Year 6, pupils achieve well overall. During the inspection, pupils in Year 6 responded with great enthusiasm to the challenge of finding ways to clean dirty water. They were totally involved and, consequently, achieved very well. In written work, marking is used very effectively to encourage greater scientific enquiry and aid learning.

67. The school's focus on increasing teachers' confidence in experimental and investigative science has proved very successful. Much work centres on pupils finding out for themselves. The quality of written work is good and most pupils discuss, plan and write with confidence, because they are not held back by a lack of language or literacy skills. Numeracy skills are also used effectively when graphs, charts and tables are needed to support work. Information and communication technology programs for topics, such as electricity, make a good contribution to pupils' learning.
68. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator is a teacher of very high quality who leads by example. She has a very clear sense of direction for the subject and priorities for development are totally focused upon raising standards. Documentation is of very high quality. The curriculum is well organised and addresses the difficulties associated with teaching mixed age/ mixed key stage classes very effectively. Assessment is good and plays an important role in moving the subject forward.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have sound information and communication technology skills and work confidently and competently.
- Teachers are not confident teaching all areas of the information and communication technology curriculum.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

69. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with those expected and pupils achieve satisfactorily. This reflects the situation found at the last inspection. The school is well resourced and there are sufficient computers to enable pupils to use them as a matter of course in lessons. This is particularly beneficial to pupils with special educational needs as the school has appropriate software to enable them to practise basic skills in an enjoyable way, which consolidates their learning well. However, because new equipment had only just been installed in the new classrooms prior to the inspection, the school was experiencing teething problems with both software and internet access which meant that lessons taught did not always match planning, although through no fault of the staff. Teachers adapted work appropriately to mitigate the effects of equipment malfunctions. Teachers make good use of the resources available to develop pupils' skills and understanding in the use of information and communication technology and the school is in a strong position to raise standards further.
70. From an early age, pupils gain confidence in using the computers and see information and communication technology as a means to help make their work easier and more interesting. By Year 2, pupils have a sound range of competencies. Most use the mouse and keyboard competently to operate the tools and symbols on their screens without help. They can change the size and style of font as well as adding borders to their work to make it more interesting. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate their skills by bringing a range of elements together to adapt and extend a PowerPoint presentation about the wives of Henry the Eighth started by a teacher, after a limited opportunity to explore the application. Discussions with pupils showed they have learned to successfully utilise the internet in order to enhancing their own work, and are

confident in using data processing and spread sheet applications. The school has an appropriate agreement on internet safety, which is agreed by parents and pupils alike.

71. The quality of teaching and learning of information and communication technology skills is sound throughout the school. The overall knowledge and understanding of the teaching staff are sound, although it was clear from teachers' planning and discussions that they are not confident in the modelling area of the curriculum.
72. Information and communication technology is led and managed well. The subject leader has ensured that teachers are competent in the use of information and communication technology, and has correctly identified the area where they lack confidence and planned appropriate training. She is aware of the areas which require improvement and the integration of information and communication technology fully into the curriculum is identified in the school improvement plan. A good system of assessment has been introduced.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Information and communication technology is used well to support the teaching of other subjects. There are sufficient computers in the classrooms for pupils to be able to use them regularly for research or work in subjects across the curriculum. Because of this information and communication technology is used extensively across the curriculum and there are many examples of its useful application. For instance, it is used to good effect in English for word processing, in geography and history for research, and for creating databases for work in mathematics.

HUMANITIES

No judgements are made on the overall quality of provision in **history and geography**, as only one lesson was seen. From the evidence available, indications are that standards are average in both subjects and that pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactorily. Some pupils demonstrate above average knowledge and understanding and are particularly well informed about their local environment. Documentation for the humanities is of good quality and work is well matched to the needs of different ages and abilities. Many of the positive features found at the time of the previous inspection have been retained. The school has made steady improvement in moving provision forward. In both history and geography, teachers provide an enjoyable and interesting range of activities that make learning fun. Humanities are well led and managed. Assessment procedures are simple but effective and give a good level of information about pupils' individual progress.

74. In **history**, good links with other subjects, such as art and design, stimulate interest and capture pupils' enthusiasm. In Key Stage 2, pupils identify portraits of Tudor monarchs from work they have been doing in art. Teachers make effective use of technology, such as the digital projector, to support learning. Pupils use a wide variety of sources, ranging from the internet to fact files and written records. Information and communication technology skills develop well. Topics, such as the Great Fire of London and Ancient Greece, are covered in sufficient depth to ensure a good level of understanding. There is good attention to the development of research skills.
75. In **geography**, portfolios of previous work give good insight into the quality of provision. Pupils clearly enjoy the subject and take pride in their work. Most value the uniqueness of their location and the importance of environmental issues. Visits and visitors play an important part in bringing the subject alive. Numerous opportunities, such as the 'Maps and Compass Skills' trip, make very effective use of the local environment and cement strong links between the two subjects. Visitors, including the Dartmoor Ranger, enhance provision and inspire pupils. Links with other schools are very strong and result in high quality collaboration on topics such as the 'rivers' project. Literacy skills are developed well, particularly in poetry work linked to the local environment. There are numerous other examples of the strong links between subjects and the effective development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The ethos of the school, including assemblies, enhances and supports pupils' learning.

COMMENTARY

76. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. From this and from an examination of teachers' planning, pupils' work, and discussions with pupils, it is clear that standards by the end of Years 2 and 6 are broadly in line with those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is sound and this gives them the confidence to plan lessons appropriately and use interesting methods to motivate and enthuse the pupils. In an effective lesson for pupils in Years 1 and 2, the teacher's good relationships with the class created the right atmosphere for pupils to confidently share their feelings and find books which appealed to them and which were special. This proved to be a good introduction to the Bible as special book and the particular meaning it has for Christians.
77. Pupils gain a good understanding of the various cultures present in Britain through their studies of other religions. Pupils in Year 6, for example, talked confidently, and with interest, about the symbols and festivals particular to other faiths, such as Hinduism. This demonstrated well the fact that although they presently live in a largely mono-cultural area they were becoming aware of, and developing a respect for, the multi-cultural society in which they are growing up. Pupils willingly discuss feelings and show a keen appreciation of the needs of others. The religious education curriculum provides very good support in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The daily acts of worship include Bible and other religious stories, opportunities for prayer and songs of praise. These significantly focus pupils' thinking about religious, personal and moral issues as well as promoting a clear code of ethics. Very good links already established with the local church further enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding of faith communities.
78. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The teacher is knowledgeable and has developed a good quality action plan for the development of the subject. Pupils' work is assessed appropriately and a useful portfolio of work is being developed.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

No lessons were observed in **art and design, design and technology and music**. As a result, it is not possible to make firm judgements about provision. However, pupils' work was examined carefully and inspectors held discussions with pupils about what they had learned in these subjects. In addition teachers' planning and subject leaders' files were examined.

79. From the good amount of work observed around the school, standards in **art and design** are in line with those expected at the end of Year 2, and above those expected at the end of Year 6, and pupils experience the full range of the art and design curriculum. In Year 6, pupils had good knowledge about famous artists and could name a number of painters as well as sculptors and potters such as Bernard and David Leach. The good quality of work around the school shows that pupils have access to a wide range of media and experiences, such as three-dimensional sculpture, using wire and paper, collage work using a variety of textiles, and imaginative weaving using a range of materials. The lack of use of pupils' sketchbooks for trying out ideas was a criticism at the last inspection. This issue has been addressed and sketch books are used for a wide range of purposes, as well as experimenting with ideas.

Sketches were generally of good quality and pupils were able to evaluate and amend their work well.

80. Standards in **design and technology** are broadly in line with those expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. There is a good coverage of the curriculum, with classes appropriately learning the full design process. However, there was very little work to be seen, although a useful portfolio contained good detail of work covered. For example, a project to design and make a new drink showed that pupils brainstormed ideas, disassembled and analysed packaging, evaluated and designed advertising material such as posters, as well as composing an appropriate jingle for radio advertising. Finally, pupils completed assessment sheets evaluating how successful the project was. Work frequently reflects whole school projects. For example, in the summer of 2004, the whole school designed and made rafts as part of their 'Rivers' project. The work was carefully differentiated so that pupils of all ages and abilities were appropriately challenged.
81. Evidence taken from other activities demonstrates that **music** is a very important part of school life. The whole school was heard singing in assemblies. This singing was of good quality. All pupils have good opportunities to participate in concerts and performances, such as 'Jonah Man Jazz', and work is linked well to other subjects. For example, in Key Stage 2 pupils learnt songs and composed music as part of the 'rivers' project. The school has put much thought into providing materials that will sustain pupils' enjoyment of music until they leave. This approach has reversed a trend of some pupils, particularly boys, not liking music. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection and uses its expertise very well. The headteacher works with all year groups and transmits her enthusiasm for the subject very effectively. The school provides a good range of instrumental tuition, including clarinet, recorder, guitar, keyboard and cello. Co-ordination of the subject is very good and areas for development are accurate and realistic.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use of specialist teaching has raised the profile of physical education significantly.
- 'Wake and Shake' not only increases pupils' fitness levels, but also provides a very positive start to the school day.
- Pupils look forward to their physical education lessons.
- The school provides good opportunities for pupils to participate in sport.

Commentary

82. Evidence taken from a small number of lesson observations, teachers' planning and photographs of previous work, indicates that standards are in line with those expected at the end of both key stages. Some older pupils demonstrate above average ability in gymnastics. All pupils make good progress and achieve well.
83. Physical education has not always been the high profile subject it is today. The school rightly identified the need to improve provision and appointed a part-time specialist teacher to lead the subject. This teacher is of very high calibre, provides a very good role model for pupils, and has made a significant contribution to the good improvement achieved since the previous inspection. Teaching is of a consistently high standard. The quality of planning is excellent and assessment is used effectively to track the progress of individual pupils. In discussion, pupils of all ages frequently stated that physical education was their favourite subject. In lessons, they enjoy the challenge of improving their work. Pupils with special educational needs, in particular, respond well to individual praise and encouragement. A good example of this enjoyment occurred during a very good gymnastics lesson for the Years 3 and 4 class. Pupils of all abilities made considerable progress when trying to 'maintain a shape', because they were

skilfully guided and kept on task by gentle persuasion. Pupils who showed talent were challenged and extended at every opportunity, because the teacher had total security with the subject. Consequently, standards were good and pupils were proud of what they had achieved.

84. The school has a strong commitment towards raising levels of fitness. 'Wake and Shake' fills that need very effectively. Pupils of all ages were observed jumping, running and jogging at the start of the school day. Not only were the activities effective in improving stamina and alertness, but they also provided a very good social occasion for the whole school community. The school deservedly achieved 'Activemark' status in 2003.
85. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities on offer for a school of this size, with plans for further development. The school makes appropriate arrangements for swimming. Involvement in activities, such as the Teign Valley Schools' football competition, and numerous opportunities to perform in concerts and other events, further enhance provision.
86. Cramped hall and playground conditions have a detrimental effect upon provision. Pupils achieve well, however, despite the limitations. New balancing and climbing resources have improved gymnastics facilities, particularly for pupils in Key Stage 1. Their introduction, however, has reduced already inadequate hall space. Further work remains to be done to improve storage.
87. There has been much recent improvement in physical education provision and there are encouraging signs that the school is well placed to continue to raise standards in the future.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The personal development of pupils permeates the work of the school.
- This area of the curriculum has a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Commentary

88. The school regards pupils' personal development as a very important part of its work. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is led and managed very well. The co-ordinator has devised a very comprehensive programme for personal, social and health education. It includes work on diet, fitness and health. The school deservedly received a Healthy Schools' award in 2003. There is good provision for sex and relationships education and drugs awareness and personal development focuses very strongly on the importance of relationships. In this respect, all adults present very good role models and pupils enjoy coming to school and want to do their best. The success of many lessons is directly attributable to the very secure relationships that exist. Pupils know they are the most important part of a small, tightly knit community, and that their views are greatly valued. All age groups and abilities have regular opportunities to explore and discuss issues, such as choosing between right and wrong. By the time pupils leave, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education. The vast majority demonstrate maturity and genuine pride in their school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2
The leadership and management of the school	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	2
The effectiveness of management	2

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).